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At hospitals, Alzheimer's care lacking

Drive underway in Mass. to address shortcomings

By Felice J. Freyer
GLOBE STAFF

Steve Johanson had a fierce and knowledgeable advocate at his side when he visited a hospital recently: his wife, Judy. In the six years since Steve had been diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's disease, she had immersed herself in understanding the illness and preparing for its consequences.

But even so, the hospital stay to adjust Steve's Alzheimer's medication was a nightmare. In the emergency room, nurses briskly took his vital signs, oblivious to his confusion. When he became upset, the staff didn't seem to understand why.

"I felt like we were aliens that had just landed in a place that had no idea of the language we spoke and no concept of the disease my husband had," Judy Johanson said.

By the end of his four-week stay, Johanson said, her husband had lost the ability to walk and could not return to their Watertown home.

People with Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia frequently need hospital care, yet few hospitals are prepared for them. Nearly every aspect of that environment — beeping ma-

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE, Page A6

Wiretap law update resisted

Despite support for change, 1968 rules are left intact

By Joshua Miller
GLOBE STAFF

For decades, Massachusetts prosecutors have urged lawmakers to grant them broader power to conduct wiretaps to fight crime. For decades, the lawmakers have refused.

These days, updating the state's 1968 wiretapping law is supported by every district attorney, and also by the Republican governor, the Democratic attorney general, and the progressive chief justice of the Supreme Judicial Court.

Standing in their way: the Massachusetts Legislature, which this fall killed a measure to make it easier for prosecutors to wiretap suspected criminals.

"When I speak to legislators one-on-one, the conversations are good and promising," said Suffolk District Attorney Dan Conley. "But for some reason, year after year after year, this ends up rotting on the vine."

At its core, the debate speaks to a key tension in every democracy: How much power should the government have to breach citizens' privacy in attempts to keep the public safe?

The current law allows wiretapping only

WIRETAP, Page A10

A bitter, bleak reality for city's homeless

By Evan Allen
GLOBE STAFF
and Sarah Betancourt
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

New Year's Day brought the fifth consecutive day of temperatures below 20 degrees to Boston and fears from officials and homeless people that the sustained frigid weather was taxing the city's resources and imperiling the lives of people on the streets.

About 1,700 homeless people have filled shelters — several hundred more than usual, city officials said, straining resources and sending advocates, police, and other emergency personnel on searches to

bring more people inside.

"It has never been this bad," said Karen LaFrazia, president of St. Francis House, the day shelter where she has worked for 20 years. "It's just so frozen. I see people coming in with their hands bloated, skin purple. . . . You can sort of see people hunkered into themselves."

With Tuesday projected to hit a high of 18 degrees, the city is poised to record its second-longest stretch of consecutive days — six in a row — with temperatures below 20, said Hayden Frank, meteorologist for the National Weather Service. The record of seven days, he said, stretched

HOMELESS, Page A5



DINA RUDICK/GLOBE STAFF

Jose Jelgado, a homeless man, rested at South Station Monday.

Walsh starts new year with vow

At swearing-in for new term, mayor says Long Island will again be recovery center



PHOTOS BY KEITH BEDFORD/GLOBE STAFF

Former vice president Joe Biden was a guest Monday to the swearing-in of Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh.



In a historic precedent, six of Boston's 13 city councilors are now women of color. From left: Lydia Edwards, Michelle Wu, Annessa Essaibi-George, Andrea Campbell, Ayanna Pressley, and Kim Janey. Campbell was elected council president Monday.

By Milton J. Valencia
GLOBE STAFF

As he embarked on his second term, Mayor Martin J. Walsh on Monday vowed to rebuild the bridge to Long Island, proclaiming that the former base of homeless shelters and rehabilitation programs on the island will once again play a "vital role in Boston's recovery landscape."

Walsh also promised to expand education and job training programs and offered a bevy of social services aimed at helping Boston's most vulnerable populations and boosting its middle class.

"We can be the city that is world class because it works for the middle class," Walsh said to thunderous applause before hundreds of supporters who gathered for his swearing-in ceremony at the Cutler Majestic Theater on a frigid New Year's Day morning.

Several of his proposals sparked questions from city councilors, specifically his plans to rebuild the Long Island bridge at a cost of up to \$100 million.

The mayor ordered an emergency evacuation of the island and the closure of the aging bridge in

INAUGURATION, Page A10

In the news



Heat wave

Tuesday: Mercury up, slightly. High 17-22, low 11-16.
Wednesday: Sunny, warmer. High 27-32, low 18-23.
High tide: 11:31, 10:50.
Sunrise: 7:13. Sunset: 4:23.
Complete report, **C8**.

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Add 20 minutes of travel time to your morning commute, the MBTA advised, as frigid temperatures hinder bus, ferry, and rail services. **B3**.

Lawmakers returning to Capitol Hill must grapple with how to avoid a government shut-down and deal with several contentious issues. **A7**.

Iranian protesters, ignoring pleas for calm, took to the streets in several cities for the fifth day as state television reported 13 people have been killed in the strife. **A4**.

North Korea's surprise call for direct talks could undercut President Trump's insistence that the world isolate the country as it continues to advance its nuclear weapons program. **A3**.

A former Fenway health center doctor faces new allegations of sexual harassment. **B1**.

A state task force recommended relaxing tax rules that pummel hard ciders and other fruit-based drinks with more than 6 percent alcohol. **B10**.

Labor battles could help determine which party controls Congress later this year. **B10**.

POINT OF VIEW:
CHRISTOPHER GASPER

The playoff field 'worked out so favorably for the Patriots that you would think NFL senior vice president of officiating Alberto Riveron was reviewing and setting the playoff field for them.'

C1.



EPA/SHUTTERSTOCK

CALIFORNIANS QUEUE UP With legal sales of recreational marijuana off to a strong start, proponents believe the Golden State will become the world's largest market. **A2**.

Tax cuts bump up paychecks but can't help like raises would

By Evan Horowitz
GLOBE STAFF

It's more than a new year, it's a whole new regime for employers and workers, who have to make sense of the major tax changes Congress passed in December.

QUICK STUDY Starting in February, most workers will see a much-appreciated bump in their paychecks as a result of these tax cuts. But over time those benefits will shrink, and after eight years they'll disappear, when key provisions expire.

And that helps drive home a key point: Tax cuts are a poor substitute for raises.

Let's imagine ourselves as a typical breadwinner in Massachusetts, with a salary of about \$80,000. Under the old tax system, we could expect to keep about \$55,000, after accounting for local, state, and federal taxes.

Under the new law, though, our take-home pay jumps to \$56,000, an increase of about 1.8 percent, according to calculations from the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center. That's not nothing — who would turn down an extra \$1,000? — but it's probably not life-altering, either.

Especially when you consider this won't be the only change in our paychecks.

Lots of us will also see our health insurance premiums go up. In recent years, employee premiums have been steadily rising all over the country, enough to cut our take-home pay by roughly \$200, which would wipe out a chunk of the expected tax benefit.

Then there's the question of whether we get a raise this year. When the economy is growing and the labor market is tight — as ours has been for years now — average wages should be increasing around 3.5 percent per year.

Unfortunately, typical workers haven't been seeing these gains. Instead, wages have been growing between 2 and 2.5 percent per year. That means such workers as us — typical breadwinners in Massachusetts — are getting raises worth \$1,300 instead of \$2,000, after taxes.

Taken at face value, that missing \$700 seems to be more than compensated for by the \$1,000 tax break. But there's a big difference here: Wage growth compounds. Raises happen every year, so we wouldn't just get that extra \$700

TAX CUT, Page A7